

# HUMAN CAPITAL PLAN QUARTERLY ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT (QAR) (FY04 QTR 1)

## Mission Area: Farm & Foreign Agricultural Services (FFAS)

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### STATUS of Strategic Human Capital Management

**Instructions:** For each Human Capital Improvement Goal, please mark an "X" to report the general progress your agency has made relative to the established timelines of each action strategy.

In addition, please provide a brief narrative on the steps the agency expects to take toward making progress. If any, identify best practices, current or future challenges that may impede your progress, and potential solutions to overcome those challenges. The narrative you provide may be used to facilitate discussions at HCAT Team meetings, HC forums, HRLC meetings, etc. Best practices identified will be shared with other agencies via the HC Web site. OPM's *Human Capital Assessment and Accountability Framework* can be used as a reference.

#### 1. Strategic Alignment and Human Capital Planning: Institute a practice of systematic human capital management that is aligned with the USDA and agency strategic plans, and integrated with budgets.

##### 1.A.1.0 ☒ Completed/Ongoing ☐ Progressing ☐ No Progress

Develop (i.e., either by developing a unique agency plan or adopting and modifying the Department's HC Plan) and begin implementing an HC Plan that includes a communications component. The agency plans should be developed by human resources (HR) in collaboration with agency leaders and managers and integrated with agency strategic plans to identify mission-critical and HC issues. **Timeline: 2nd Qtr FY03 with ongoing activities; 4<sup>th</sup> Qtr FY03 first HC Plan due with a review to be conducted the 1<sup>st</sup> Qtr of each FY**

**STATUS: 1Q FY04 UPDATE:** The 5 year USDA/FFAS Human Capital Plan for FY03-07 has been in place for the Mission Area. A Departmental organized review was conducted at the end of the fiscal year. HR determined that no major changes were required in that it remains in direct support of the missions of the Mission Area's three agencies. For example, emphasis will continue to ensure employees have the right skills to perform their mission critical occupations and to ensure effective leadership development.

In addition, FSA HR is actively participating in the implementation of the Budget & Performance-based Management System that involves the reengineering of business processes and the development of state-of-the-art technology solutions that meet business requirements for an integrated financial, budget, and performance-based management system. This effort will ensure the inclusion of critical human capital elements in the revised FSA Strategic Plan and the results-driven Balanced Scorecard.

In continuation of the FFAS communication plan, the QAR and Scorecard for the agencies are posted quarterly on the FFAS Human Resources intranet site along with the link to the Human Capital Plan and several other human capital management documents. FFAS HR facilitates the preparation and communication of the Quarterly Activity Report / Scorecard items among agency leadership ensuring the routine collaboration of human capital management activities.

##### 1.A.2.0 ☒ Completed/Ongoing ☐ Progressing ☐ No Progress (OMB reference: Human Capital strategies are linked to agency mission and goals)

Align human capital plan elements with agency strategic plan/annual performance plans. **Timeline: 1<sup>st</sup> Qtr FY03 start discussion with ongoing activities**

**STATUS: 1Q FY04 UPDATE:** The Human Resources Division completed its FY04 Planning and Strategy conference in October. 47 Implementing Projects were identified that support the missions of the agencies, incorporate the Department's "Proud to Be" objectives and embrace the OPM/OMB human capital standards, and the results of the Federal Human Capital Survey. The major HR elements (Implementing Projects) will be reviewed with the stakeholders from the agencies during the first quarter. This will ensure effective alignment to and support of the agencies' strategic plans.

##### 1.A.3.0 ☒ Completed/Ongoing ☐ Progressing ☐ No Progress

Set priorities for resources and funding in accordance with the agency human capital plan. **Timeline:** 3<sup>rd</sup> Qtr FY03, review 3<sup>rd</sup> Qtr of each FY

**STATUS: 1Q FY04 UPDATE:** The Implementing Projects for FY04 include inputs (resources and funding) and are prioritized in collaboration with agency leadership. Results and status of these projects will be reviewed each quarter with the agency leadership and major customers. In addition, HR actively participates in the Activity Based Costing (Work Measurement) System to approximate its budget and performance against the agencies' major programs. The Human Capital investments for the FY04/05 Budget Year have been considered and approved that focus on the recruitment of mission critical occupations, diversity recruitment and leadership training to support the succession plans. The Human Capital investments for the FY06 Budget Year are under development.

**1.A.4.0 ☒ Completed/Ongoing ☐ Progressing ☐ No Progress**

Participate in Departmentwide collaboration efforts by providing representatives for working groups and forums, and sharing best practices. **Timeline:** 1<sup>st</sup> Qtr FY03 with ongoing activities

**STATUS: 1Q FY04 UPDATE:** FFAS representatives regularly participate in USDA Human Capital activities. For example, in the first quarter, an FFAS HR representative attended the USDA-endorsed HUMAN CAPITAL ACCOUNTABILITY WORKSHOP conducted by OPM.

**2. Workforce Planning and Deployment:** Institute a Departmentwide practice of conducting workforce planning that enables the Department and our agencies to efficiently and effectively deploy the workforce, as well as prevent skills gaps.

**2.A.1.0 ☒ Completed/Ongoing ☐ Progressing ☐ No Progress** (OMB reference: Current and future skill gaps in mission critical occupations are identified and reduced)

Agency leadership and human resources staff collaborate to conduct workforce planning using the Departmentwide model. **Timeline:** All agencies complete workforce plans by 4<sup>th</sup> Qtr FY04; Forest Service and Service Center agencies make progress in implementing by 2<sup>nd</sup> Qtr FY04; "Showcase" agencies (FSIS, NRCS, FNS, FSA) make progress in implementing by 2<sup>nd</sup> Qtr FY05; All other agencies make progress in implementing by 2<sup>nd</sup> Qtr FY06

**STATUS: 1Q FY04 UPDATE:** The preliminary FFAS Workforce Analysis (adapted from the Departmentwide model) completed in FY03 is the focal point for the strategic management of human capital in the Mission Area. By identifying skills gaps in 27 Mission Critical Occupations and continuity concerns for 24 Leadership Positions, HR has refined its Recruitment Plans, Diversity Plans, Training & Development Strategy, Succession Plans and Retention Plans. These efforts are used to drive the FY04 HR Implementing Projects and support the Agency Strategic Plans by reducing the projected skills gaps and ensuring the continuity of leadership positions in the three agencies. The FFAS Workforce Planning & Succession Planning Guidance has been identified as a Best Practice in assisting smaller agencies to identify projected skills gaps related to their eligible-to-retain projections.

**2.A.2.0 ☐ Completed/Ongoing ☒ Progressing ☐ No Progress** (OMB reference: Organization is restructured as appropriate to provide optimal service at lowest cost and respond to changing business needs; strategies include redeployment, delaying, competitive sourcing, and E-Gov)

Develop and implement workforce restructuring plans, with program manager involvement, that incorporates competitive sourcing solutions and resource savings related to eGovernment efficiencies. **Timeline:** 4th Qtr FY02 with ongoing activities to be completed in 1st Qtr FY07

**STATUS: 1Q FY04 UPDATE:** FSA continues to be actively engaged with RD and NRCS in the USDA Restructuring Plan involving six Administrative Convergence initiatives and the streamlining of 200 additional county offices. FSA, RMA and FAS continue to play a role in the e-learning initiatives of the USDA. RMA and FAS continue to review their organizational structures to identify opportunities for improvement. Additionally, FSA and RMA are directly involved with the IT Convergence project. The purpose of IT Convergence is to create a more efficient IT organization that can effectively aid the Service Center Agencies' business needs, support prior and future infrastructure projects, and be more efficient and coordinated for our public customers.

**2.A.3.0 ☐ Completed/Ongoing ☒ Progressing ☐ No Progress**

Provide updates to the Department on restructuring plans. **Timeline:** Begin 4th Qtr FY02, reporting in 1st Qtr FY03, activities to be completed 1st Qtr FY07

**STATUS: NO UPDATE:** Restructuring updates have not been requested from the Department in the 4th Quarter. However, FFAS continues to review their organizational structures to identify opportunities for improvement.

### 3. Accountability System: Ensure USDA human resource programs are strategically aligned, effective, efficient, and in compliance with applicable laws and regulations (e.g., Veteran's Preference Act, Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO), Merit System Principles) and the PMA using a Departmentwide accountability system.

#### 3.A.1.0 ☒ Completed/Ongoing ☐ Progressing ☐ No Progress

Participate in the development of USDA's HRM Accountability Program. **Timeline:** Begin 4th Qtr FY02, completion 1st Qtr FY03

**STATUS: 1Q FY04 UPDATE:** FFAS continues to provide representation in the application of the USDA HCP companion document, the Accountability System Plan. A review of this plan was completed in the 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter, including the Scorecard and Quarterly Activity Reports that measure the agency's progress towards the OMB/OPM Human Capital Standards and ensures consistent implementation of the Human Capital Plan.

#### 3.A.2.0 ☒ Completed/Ongoing ☐ Progressing ☐ No Progress

Systematically evaluate agency programs using processes, tools, and schedules contained in the USDA Accountability Program. **Timeline:** 2nd Qtr FY03 with ongoing activities

**STATUS: 1Q FY04 UPDATE:** FFAS continually engages the Human Capital Plan action strategies and timelines; and measures its outcomes in all nine improvement goals of the Human Capital Plan. In addition, FFAS posted the results of the Federal Human Capital Survey on the intranet and provided the results to each Agency Administrator.

#### 3.A.3.0 ☒ Completed/Ongoing ☐ Progressing ☐ No Progress (OMB reference: Human Capital program is guided by measurable outcomes)

Provide quarterly reports via the HC Plan reporting system on progress toward USDA Accountability Program goals and actions (once the reporting system is developed). **Timeline:** 4th Qtr FY02 with ongoing activities

**STATUS: NO UPDATE:** FFAS routinely completes the Quarterly Activity Reports and associated Scorecard according to the USDA HCP; and is communicated through the agency's strategic human capital council and the intranet.

### 4. Talent Management: Align recruitment and retention strategies with workforce planning efforts to enhance the effectiveness of these efforts and close critical position and competency gaps.

#### 4.A.1.0 ☒ Completed/Ongoing ☐ Progressing ☐ No Progress

Develop and align agency-specific recruitment and retention plans with workforce planning and deployment plans; focus on mission-critical positions as well as existing and projected competency gaps. **Timeline:** 4th Qtr FY03 with a review the 4th Qtr of each successive FY

**STATUS: 1Q FY04 UPDATE:** The results of the Workforce Analysis, where skills gaps for Mission Critical Occupations and continuity strategies for Leadership Positions are identified, are being incorporated into Recruitment Plans, Diversity Plans, Training & Development/Succession Programs and Retention Plans. These plans drive agency specific human capital initiatives and HR Implementing Projects. For instance, FFAS has completed its Recruitment Strategy for FY 2003 – FY 2005 incorporating the findings of the Workforce Analysis. In addition, FAS conducts annual skills assessments to ensure employees have the critical skills to accomplish their mission and goals.

#### 4.A.2.0 ☒ Completed/Ongoing ☐ Progressing ☐ No Progress

Train recruiters and supply the necessary materials to effectively represent the agency and USDA. **Timeline:** Began in FY02 with ongoing activities

**STATUS: 1Q FY04 UPDATE:** The FFAS agencies provided recruitment competency training to members of their Recruitment Committees and the Civil Rights Special Emphasis Program Managers who assist with recruitment

outreach activities. HR continues to promote the Agencies to attract candidates targeted for mission critical occupations where skills gaps have been identified. In addition, the tasks and activities of the Recruitment Teams for FY04 will be defined and/or clarified this quarter in relation to FFAS Diversity plans and the FY04 planned accomplishments identified in the Recruitment Strategy. The FFAS recruitment activities will be leveraged with USDA sponsored activities to ensure economies of scale, e.g., job fairs at minority universities.

**4.A.3.0** ☒ **Completed/Ongoing** ☐ **Progressing** ☐ **No Progress**

Continue to explore and promote the use of HR flexibilities to recruit and retain employees and emphasize planning for their use in the budget cycle. **Timeline:** Began in FY02 with ongoing activities

**STATUS: 1Q FY04 UPDATE:** FFAS strategically uses available flexibilities to meet its recruitment and retention goals. The HR website has included a link to the OPM - Human Resources Flexibilities and Authorities in the Federal Government document to ensure consistent communications of flexibilities.

**4.A.4.0** ☒ **Completed/Ongoing** ☐ **Progressing** ☐ **No Progress**

Increase the use of senior leaders and program managers in recruiting activities, especially those focused on meeting diversity goals and filling mission-critical and competency-gap positions (e.g., at the university level and PMI program). **Timeline:** 3<sup>rd</sup> Qtr FY03 with ongoing activities

**STATUS: 1Q FY04 UPDATE:** Using the results of the Workforce Analysis, senior leaders have identified several recruiting activities to incorporate into the Recruitment and Diversity Plans. Leaders are involved in career fairs, developing selection criteria and long term recruitment strategies. The FFAS Recruitment Strategy encourages and targets specific universities and outreach sources, the utilization of Career/Student Intern Programs and other 'feeder' organizations.

**5. Leadership Development and Succession Planning:** Ensure leadership continuity and development through workforce planning and analysis, and optimal use of available tools and resources throughout the Department, to better achieve mission requirements.

**5.A.1.0** ☒ **Completed/Ongoing** ☐ **Progressing** ☐ **No Progress** (OMB reference: Continuity of leadership and knowledge is assured through succession planning and professional development)

Include the leadership function (i.e., managers, supervisors, and SES cadre) in the workforce planning and analysis process to identify agency-specific position and competency requirements. **Timeline:** 2nd Qtr FY03

**STATUS: 1Q FY04 UPDATE:** The agencies' Deputy Administrators identified needed skills for Mission Critical Occupations (current and future) and competency needs of our future leaders. Data has been incorporated into Recruitment Plans, Diversity Plans, Training & Development Programs, Succession Plans and Retention Plans; and will be used to drive HR Implementing Projects over the next few years. For example, RMA incorporated the "Speed-In-Business" technique to ensure an efficient and effective results-oriented agency. Also, FAS applies its Leadership Rotation Program ensuring the development of current and future leaders throughout the agency.

**5.A.2.0** ☐ **Completed/Ongoing** ☒ **Progressing** ☐ **No Progress** (OMB reference: Continuity of leadership and knowledge is assured through succession planning and professional development)

Develop agency-specific succession plans using a Departmental framework and toolkit. **Timeline:** Begin 4th Qtr FY03, completion 1st Qtr FY04

**STATUS: 1Q FY04 UPDATE:** The Succession Planning Guidance offered by the Department was incorporated into the FFAS Workforce Planning & Succession Guidance. The objective for an effective succession plan is to ensure an adequate 'leadership back-up pool' thus assuring the continuity of leadership and transfer of critical knowledge over time. The Human Capital Scorecard is used track and trend the back-up pool for each agency and the scheduled completion of the FFAS Training & Development Strategy will define specific actions. Furthermore, FAS has institutionalized its Leadership Rotation Program that aids in the effective succession of agency leadership.

**6. Knowledge Management and Employee Development:** Ensure that the USDA captures and shares knowledge, and develops employee competence to better perform the Department's mission.

**6.A.1.0 ☒ Completed/Ongoing ☐ Progressing ☐ No Progress**

Actively participate in the USDSA e-Government, content/knowledge management effort, and implement Department's knowledge management strategy when complete. **Timeline: 2nd Qtr FY03**

**STATUS: 1Q FY04 UPDATE:** FFAS continues to actively support the USDA e-Learning initiative where the LMS (Learning Management System) and other web-based training systems are under review and implementation.

**6.A.2.0 ☐ Completed/Ongoing ☒ Progressing ☐ No Progress**

Develop and/or implement a training strategy linked to workforce planning and deployment efforts that addresses standards for technology investments. **Timeline: 4th Qtr FY03**

**STATUS: 1Q FY04 UPDATE:** The FFAS Training and Development Strategy is 75% complete and will include a progressive Leadership Development Program(s) that prepare our future leaders and fine-tune the competencies of incumbent leaders. For example, FSA has completed the development of the Administrative Officer Training Program and implementation will be completed this first quarter. Also, the New Supervisor Training Program, the Strategic Management Skills Training for District Managers were completed and implemented. These programs are adaptable for RMA and FAS where applicable and requested. Where applicable, an FFAS representative(s) on the USDA e-Learning team will coordinate IT investments related to training and development activities.

**6.A.3.0 ☒ Completed/Ongoing ☐ Progressing ☐ No Progress**

Participate in and support implementation of the ongoing eGovernment enterprise-wide efforts to establish a learning management system; implement the Department's Learning Management System (LMS) when available. **Timeline: Began in FY02 with ongoing activities**

**STATUS: 1Q FY04 UPDATE:** FFAS continues to actively support the USDA e-Learning initiative where the LMS (Learning Management System) and other web-based training systems are under review and implementation.

**6.A.4.0 ☐ Completed/Ongoing ☒ Progressing ☐ No Progress**

Assess the impact of agency training strategies on closing competency gaps and meeting business goals. **Timeline: Begin in 4th Qtr FY04, with ongoing activities**

**STATUS: 1Q FY04 UPDATE:** Ensuring employees in Mission Critical Occupations and our leaders have the right skills and competencies that contribute to a high-performing organization is the basis for the Training & Development Strategy. Reviewing the results of the FY03 Workforce Analysis indicate several improvement opportunities. Specific HR projects have been identified to address these opportunities. The FFAS Human Capital Plan (and the Department's) supports and measures progress in these areas.

**7. Performance Management:** Ensure the performance appraisal system is aligned with Departmental / organization mission accomplishment and is linked to employee development and recognition programs, ultimately improving individual and organizational performance.

**7.A.1.0 ☐ Completed/Ongoing ☒ Progressing ☐ No Progress** (OMB reference: Performance appraisals for 100% of agency SES and manager positions will link to agency mission, goals and outcomes, effectively differentiate between various levels of performance, and provide consequences based on performance)

Link the performance management system (including performance appraisal, awards and recognition, and developmental needs) with organizational mission accomplishment for all employees starting with managers. When the linkage is established, educate and/or communicate to employees about the linkage. **Timeline: Begin 4th Qtr FY03, completion 1st Qtr FY04 with ongoing activities**

**STATUS: 1Q FY04 UPDATE:** FFAS is using the SES Performance Appraisal System that includes mission, business, civil rights and homeland security elements. All FSA SES position incumbents are in the process of developing specific Performance Goals and Indicators that are directly linked to the FSA Strategic Plan and/or Budget & Performance Integration Plan. RMA and FAS SES position incumbents are reviewing their specific strategic plans and will meet the targets. This effort is in support of the Department's OBPA initiative and Budget & Performance Integration Plan.

**7.A.2.0 ☐ Completed/Ongoing ☒ Progressing ☐ No Progress**

Work with OHRM to assess the effectiveness of the agency performance management system (including performance appraisal, awards and recognition programs, and related development strategies), and ensure the system addresses performance distinctions. **Timeline: Begin 4th Qtr FY03, completion 2nd Qtr FY04**



**STATUS: 1Q FY04 UPDATE:** An FFAS representative(s) is working with the Department to coordinate the assessment of the effectiveness of the agencies' performance management systems.

In addition, FSA has launched the Performance Management Culture Model in its commitment to a long-term effort to transform its performance culture. As part of the strategy, FSA administered a Workforce Survey (complementing the Federal Human Capital Survey) this quarter seeking feedback from not only the federal employees, but the county employees as well. In so doing, FSA will gather data from all employees who are crucial to effectively and efficiently implementing the Farm Bill 2002. The results of this survey will be communicated next quarter and action plans to address major improvement areas will be developed, implemented and tied to employee accountabilities and expectations.

Likewise, the FSA DAM administered its second annual GALLUP survey to measure the degree of employee engagement on the job, a nationally accepted measure in the best-in-class organizations used to improve overall performance. The mean score for FSA in FY03 reflected an increase of just over 10% compared to the mean score in FY02. This indicates the actions taken by DAM leadership have a positive impact on employee engagement, morale and productivity.

## **8. Diversity Management, Equal Employment Opportunity, and Civil Rights:** Ensure a diverse workforce with the necessary skills to accomplish the USDA mission and strategic goals.

### **8.A.1.0** ☒ **Completed/Ongoing** ☐ **Progressing** ☐ **No Progress**

Ensure that diversity, civil rights, and EEO are properly aligned with and incorporated, as appropriate, into all strategic planning initiatives and annual performance plans. **Timeline: 1st Qtr FY04**

**STATUS: 1Q FY04 UPDATE:** OCR has a major presence in the Agencies' Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans (a.k.a. Budget Performance) with appropriate Performance Goals and Indicators. The FFAS Recruitment Strategy included input from OCR.

### **8.A.2.0** ☒ **Completed/Ongoing** ☐ **Progressing** ☐ **No Progress** (OMB reference: Workforce is diverse, including mission critical occupations and leadership; agency consistently measures and works to sustain diversity)

Incorporate diversity targets in workforce planning; continue to focus on attracting, hiring, developing, and advancing applicants and employees who are members of under-represented and socially disadvantaged groups. Ensure compliance with civil rights and EEO laws, merit systems principles, veteran's preference, and prohibited personnel practices. **Timeline: 1st Qtr FY04**

**STATUS: 1Q FY04 UPDATE:** Diversity targets have been identified by OCR and the RCLF/CLF will be the common metric. In the development of the Workforce Plan, Recruitment Strategy, Training & Development Strategy and Affirmative Employment Plan, appropriate data are assessed routinely as are the compliance factors.

### **8.A.3.0** ☒ **Completed/Ongoing** ☐ **Progressing** ☐ **No Progress** (OMB reference: Workforce is diverse, including mission critical occupations and leadership; agency consistently measures and works to sustain diversity)

Participate in Departmentwide information collection and sharing to facilitate compiling and disclosing data used in assessing compliance with civil rights, EEO, and related reporting requirements. **Timeline: 2nd Qtr FY03**

**STATUS: 1Q FY04 UPDATE:** FFAS participates fully in Department-wide information collection and data sharing as required. For example, Department-provided RCLF/CLF data is distributed to key leadership by HR on a routine basis to focus on the agencies' employee demographics, especially diversity representation. Each Agencies' status to target is recorded quarterly on the Human Capital Plan Scorecard. The FFAS YTD Hire Minority Profile reflects that all RCLF goals have been exceeded, except for Hispanic where FFAS is 1.1% short. Regarding the hire rate of disabled employees, all three agencies exceed the Department's average, but are below the 7.8% expectation for hiring disabled.

## **9. Labor and Employee Relations and Conflict Management:** Prevent and successfully resolve employee disputes and maintain effective working relationships with labor organizations.

### **9.A.1.0** ☒ **Completed/Ongoing** ☐ **Progressing** ☐ **No Progress**

Incorporate basic Labor Management Relations (LMR) and labor contract administration training into new supervisor training or new labor contract orientation programs for supervisors and managers. **Timeline:** Began in FY02, completion 1st Qtr FY05

**STATUS: 1Q FY04 UPDATE:** FFAS provides LR training to new supervisors and provides as needed or as requested training to managers, i.e., HR orientation to new appointees. 'Changes to labor agreements' training is generally communicated by HR specialists to the individual manager. FFAS Labor Relations leadership participated in a week-long training seminar presented by the Department in November.

**9.A.2.0 ☒ Completed/Ongoing ☐ Progressing ☐ No Progress**

Establish an agency LMR strategy and plan that articulates program goals and actions the agency will take to address LMR issues and obligations that may arise in conjunction with agency program changes. **Timeline:** Began FY02, completion 1st Qtr FY04

**STATUS: NO UPDATE:** Material changes, if any, to the labor agreements relative to program changes are identified and communicated to management through HR.

**9.A.3.0 ☐ Completed/Ongoing ☒ Progressing ☐ No Progress**

Participate in the development of the standardized electronic dispute record system and its eventual implementation. **Timeline:** Begin 4th Qtr FY03, completion 3rd Qtr FY04

**STATUS: NO UPDATE:** Departmental project has not begun at this time. HR has identified a representative for the developmental team.